

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-02
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ACDE-00 /143 W

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R 171549Z APR 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0177
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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GENEVA FOR SALT AND CCD DELS

MILITARY ADDRESSEES ALSO FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PARM, NATO, MNUC, MPOL, FR
SUBJ: FRENCH DEFENSE, DISARMAMENT, AND THE ERW:
AS SEEN BY FRANCOIS DE ROSE
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1. BEGIN SUMMARY: WRITING IN THE APRIL 15 LE MONDE,
FRANCOIS DE ROSE (NOW RETIRED, FORMERLY FRENCH
AMBASSADOR TO NATO) DISCUSSED THE FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE,
CLOSER COOPERATION WITH NATO, THE FRENCH DISARMAMENT
INITIATIVE, AND THE ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEAD (ERW).
DE ROSE BELIEVES THAT ON THE FIRST THREE ELEMENTS THERE

IS A GREATER CONJUNCTION OF VIEWS IN FRANCE THAN HAS EXISTED IN THE PAST. WHILE SHARPLY CRITICIZING US CONDUCT OF THE ERW ISSUE, DE ROSE ALSO TAKES THE GOF TO TASK FOR NOT TAKING A POSITION ON THE ERW. END SUMMARY.

2. DE ROSE OPENS BY NOTING THAT DEFENSE ISSUES PLAYED NO ROLE IN THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED ELECTIONS. IN THREE AREAS THERE SEEMS TO BE A RAPPROCHEMENT OF VIEWS AMONG POLITICAL FACTIONS IN FRANCE: NUCLEAR WEAPONS, COOPERATION WITH "THE MILITARY ORGANS" OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, AND DISARMAMENT.

3. FRENCH NUCLEAR WEAPONS: DE ROSE WRITES THAT AS THE HYPOTHESIS OF A LEFT VICTORY BECAME PLAUSIBLE, THE PARTIES OF THE 1972 COMMON PROGRAM (I.E., SOCIALIST, COMMUNIST, LEFT RADICALS) ABANDONED THE NUCLEAR POSITION IN THE 1972 DOCUMENT. IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO TAKE SERIOUSLY A PROGRAM WHICH CALLED FOR THE IMMEDIATE ABANDONING OF THE NUCLEAR FORCE AND THE DISMANTLING OF THE MEANS FOR FABRICATING NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE FRENCH PEOPLE HAD ACCOMMODATED THEMSELVES TO THE NUCLEAR FORCE AND WOULD HAVE REGARDED ITS SACRIFICE (WITHOUT A QUID PRO QUO) AS IRRESPONSIBLE.

4. THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF) WAS THE FIRST UNCLASSIFIED

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TO REVERSE ITSELF ON THE NUCLEAR FORCE LAST MAY 11, EVEN IF THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REVERSAL WAS CAST IN THE OPTIC OF PUSHING FRANCE TOWARD NEUTRALITY. WHILE THE COMMUNISTS EXECUTED THIS ABOUT-FACE WITHOUT DISCUSSION, "WORSHIPING ON MAY 11 THAT WHICH THEY WERE BURNING ON MAY 10," THE SOCIALISTS (PS) HAD TO PASS THROUGH A DIFFICULT DEBATE. BUT ULTIMATELY THE NUCLEAR FORCE WAS ACCEPTED BY THE PS.

5. COOPERATION WITH NATO: IF THE COMMUNIST PARTY NO LONGER CALLS INTO QUESTION FRENCH MEMBERSHIP IN THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, THE PARTY PRONOUNCES ITSELF FOR THE RENUNCIATION OF AGREEMENTS (WITH NATO) WHICH COULD LEAD TO A DE FACTO REINSERTION OF FRANCE INTO THE INTEGRATED MILITARY SYSTEM. THE PARTY FAVORS THE ACQUISITION OF SYSTEMS WHICH WILL PERMIT FRANCE TO WITHDRAW FROM NADGE.

6. THE PS POSITION IS MORE COMPLEX. DESPITE THE DIVERGENT TENDENCIES AT THE PS JANUARY 7-8 CONVENTION ON DEFENSE, A 71 MAJORITY REJECTED A MOTION PROHIBITING "ANY DOCTRINE OF FORCE ENGAGEMENT WHICH COULD LEAD

TO THE AUTOMATIC PARTICIPATION (OF FRENCH FORCES) IN A
FORWARD BATTLE IN EUROPE." PS LEADER MITTERRAND
RECALLED THAT "FRANCE HAS NOT WON A WAR AND CANNOT
WIN ONE OUTSIDE AN ALLIANCE....."MITTERRAND AFFIRMED
THAT THE AMERICANS OUGHT TO KNOW THAT THE FRENCH ARE
"NON-INTEGRATED BUT LOYAL ALLIES."

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7. DE ROSE STATES THAT ON THE MAJORITY SIDE ONE HEARS
LESS OF THE POLICY OF INDEPENDENT DEFENSE AND MORE OF

THE INDEPENDENT POLICY OF DEFENSE. HE NOTES THAT THE GAULLISTS VOTED IN 1976 FOR THE FIVE-YEAR DEFENSE PROGRAM WHICH INCLUDED THE PRINCIPLE OF COOPERATION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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FRENCH FORCES IN THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE AT THE SIDE OF THE NATO ALLIES. DE ROSE CITES PRIME MINISTER BARRE'S JUNE 1977 SPEECH WHICH, WHILE RULING OUT REINTEGRATION OR POSITIONING FRENCH FORCES ON THE FRG'S EASTERN BORDER, RECALLED THAT PREPARATION FOR A HYPOTHETICAL ENGAGEMENT OF FRENCH FORCES AT THE SIDE OF THE ALLIES WAS THE NORMAL WORK OF A MILITARY STAFF AND HAD GONE ON UNDER DE GAULLE.

8. DISARMAMENT: DE ROSE POINTS OUT THAT THE LEFT TRADITIONALLY MADE DISARMAMENT A KEYSTONE OF DEFENSE POLICY AND REPROACHED THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS REFUSAL TO ENGAGE ITSELF IN THE PROCESS. THIS HAS ALL CHANGED WITH GISCARD'S PLUNGE INTO DISARMAMENT. THE DEGREE OF NATIONAL ACCORD WHICH CAN BE ESTABLISHED ON THIS APPROACH WILL ONLY BE CLEAR WHEN THE DETAILS OF THE GOF POSITION ARE KNOWN.

9. ERW: DE ROSE TAKES PRESIDENT CARTER SHARPLY TO TASK, STATING THAT THE "NEUTRON BOMB AFFAIR" IS NOT JUST A "DISASTER" IN THAT IT FULFILLS BREZHNEV'S WISHES, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE "DISQUIETING IRRESOLUTION" EXHIBITED (BY PRESIDENT CARTER). THE DECISION IS ALSO A "DISASTER" BECAUSE IT WAS TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF A CONCERTED VIEW BY THE GOVERNMENTS MOST DIRECTLY INTERESTED.

10. DE ROSE FINDS IT HARD TO DISTRIBUTE FAIRLY THE RESPONSIBILITY, NO DOUBT SHARED, EVEN IF IT ENDS UP AT THE WHITE HOUSE. "BUT WERE THE PARTNERS WHO WERE CONSULTED CLEAR IN THEIR VIEWS? AND US? THE GOF WASHES ITS HANDS SAYING THAT THE QUESTION CONCERNS (ONLY) NATO MEMBERS. BUT IS IT CON-

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CEIVABLE TO HAVE NO OPINION ON A QUESTION TOUCHING THE SECURITY OF THE CONTINENT, AND, IF THERE IS AN OPINION, TO REFRAIN FROM STATING IT? IF WE DON'T LEARN FROM THIS, WE ARE DENYING OURSELVES THE RIGHT TO CRITICIZE."

11. DE ROSE CONTINUES THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE: FOR THE ALLIES, TO NOTE THAT THE US CAN SOMETIMES TAKE DECISIONS UNRELATED TO EUROPEAN SECURITY NEEDS; FOR FRANCE, TO NOTE THAT ABSTENTION IN THESE MATTERS DOES NOT REDOUND TO HER ADVANTAGE... "WITHOUT CONCERTED ACTION EUROPEAN SECURITY RISKS BECOMING THE PLAYTHING OF MORAL SCRUPLES AND DIPLOMATIC CHIMERAS BY SOME, BIASED PROPAGANDA AND CYNICAL MANEUVERS BY OTHERS, AND MISTRUSTED BY ALL."
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